



# VIEWPOINTS

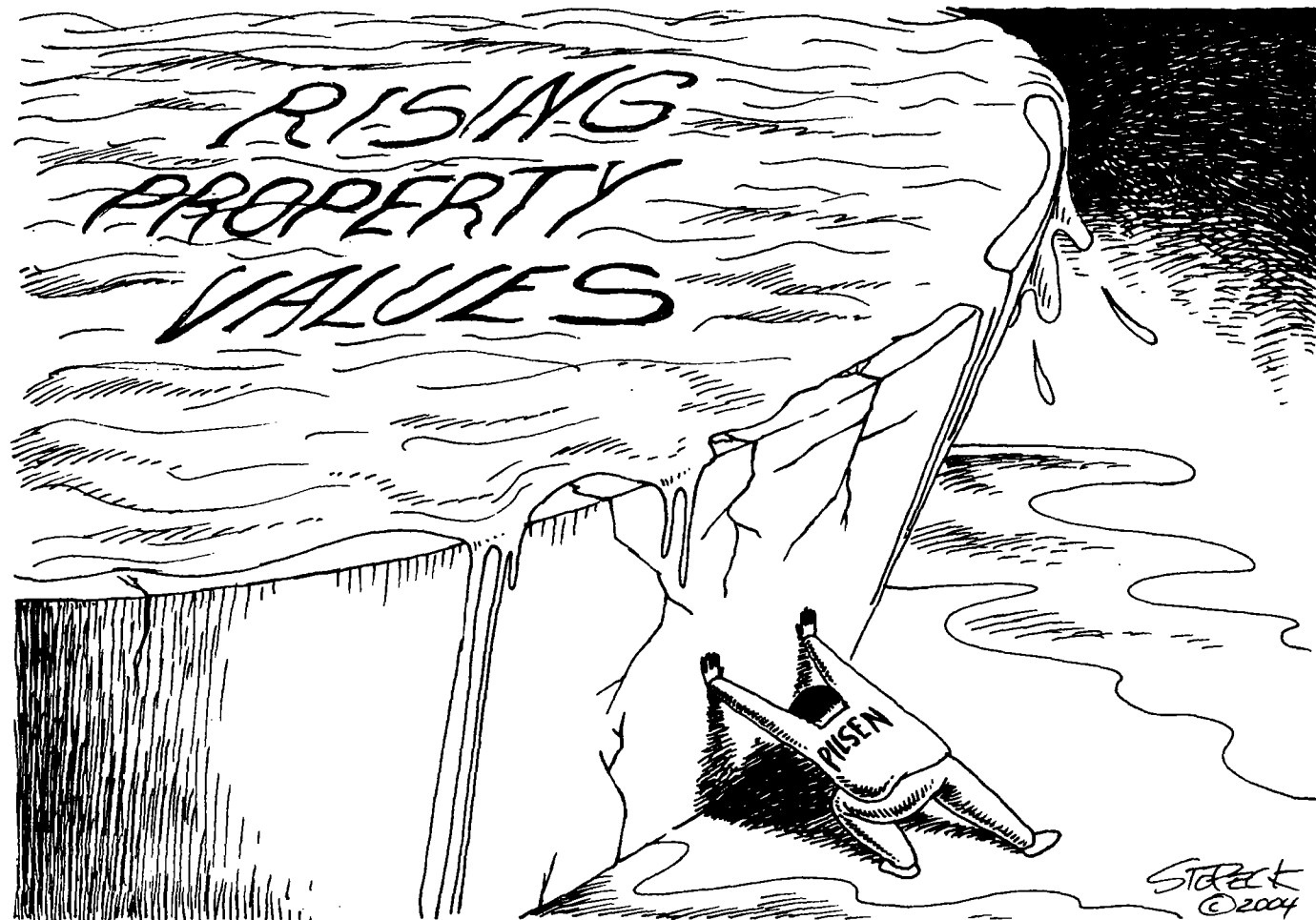
## [ Our Views ]

# DuSable Park needs a push

*It's great the city has allocated \$200,000 to put together a plan. Now the real work must begin—and quickly.*

After almost 15 years of delays, dreams, sketches, and talk, DuSable Park is getting some actual dollars its way. Not for any actual construction, mind you. The city has allocated \$200,000 in its 2004 budget for the final design for the greenspace, named in honor of the trapper, farmer, and city founder Jean Baptiste DuSable.

But activists, the money makes up in symbolism for what is missing in dollars. At last, a plan for the park is going from paper to reality. For a while there, it was just talk that might never happen, that the city pre-emptively talks till doomsday about walking paths and public space to



MARC STOPECK

# Black men worth irritating are scarce—

[ Our Views ]

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To park activists, the money makes up in symbolism what it lacks in dollars. At last, a plan for the park is going to be laid out on paper and made official. For a while there, it looked like that might never happen, that the city preferred to let residents talk till doomsday about walking paths and native plants rather than provide any public support to speed up the process. Meetings about the park's future have taken place since 1987, back when Harold Washington was mayor. Off and on since then, residents and park officials have tried to get the city to push the project forward, but response was at best lukewarm. At worst, it was counterproductive—a few years ago, the city even tried to pave over the three-acre patch of green for a parking lot.

Mayor Richard Daley has really pushed for Millennium Park, and that muscle really helped get the project rolling. As it nears completion, the excitement is palpable, with people from all over talking enthusiastically about the lakefront.

Now is not the time to neglect the rest of the city's "welcome mat." Rather, it's time for the mayor to give that same push to DuSable Park and, farther north, Queen's Landing, so the development can be carried out to its logical completion. Some serious financial backing needs to come from the city and state, as well as private sources. That's not going to happen with a whisper of enthusiasm.

Two hundred thousand dollars is a baby step forward, one that took fifteen years to make. Mankind made it to the



## Black men work in both in the movies

Actor Tim Reid's recent statement, "Black men have an image problem," was anticipated and proclaimed in rhyme more than 100 years ago in the African-American dialect poet Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem, "We Wear the Mask." Reid made his comment during a talk on black images in film at Hot House a few weeks ago.

An Emmy-nominated actor, director and producer who came to prominence in the role of Venus Flytrap on "The X-Files," Reid



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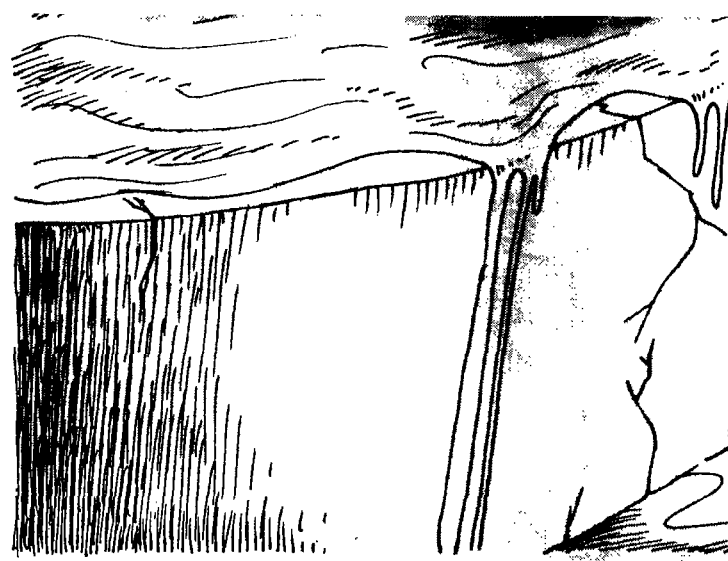
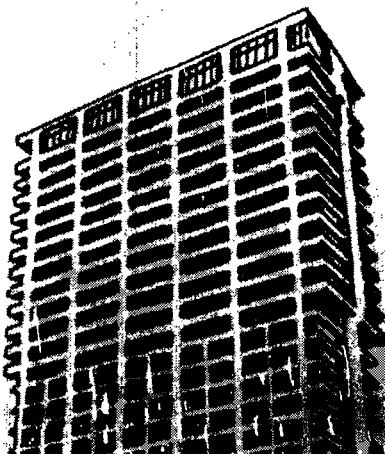
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Two hundred thousand dollars is a baby step forward, one that took fifteen years to make. Mankind made it to the moon faster than this. The city must pick up the pace. In the next year or two, if citizens aren't seeing winding pathways and a landscaped water's edge replacing rocks and crabgrass, they should loudly inquire why their leaders have failed them.



## Black men worth im both in the movies

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An Emmy-nominated actor, director and producer who came to prominence in the role of Venus Flytrap on "WKRP in Cincinnati," he is currently carving out a niche for himself as one of the few African Americans owning and operating his own production company, New Millennium Studios in Virginia.

Reid's comment was a stinging reminder to me of the unfinished business African-American men have presenting positive, multifaceted images that young black men can latch onto.

One does not have to go back to D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* to see a barrage of negative portrayals of African-American men in the mass media. During the 1990s

and '90s, black directors began to wed "hood" movie music industry, portraying accommodating, mean-spirited, drugged-up, unprincipled viewing life as a series of ships.

These movies made n and also provided lots of a generation of rootless to latch onto. As a result, males are slavishly imitating of black characters they movies, and in the music wearing the misogynistic that the American image ated. For example, I've seen black students from homes standing on street and West Garfield. When why they're not back in (or goofing off with friends they've answered that this brings them closer to wh to be black. Lacking down els in their daily lives, th answers in the excessive stars, movie characters, are thus caught up in "pl rather than being themselves.

Black intellectuals such as Tavis Smiley, and Michael Ondaatje at one time or another



GEORGE BAILEY

[ Letter

**Mission residents not getting their Z's**

between the Mission and place to sleep. He decided CTA was safer and less crowded, being turned out onto St. Louis at 6 a.m.